

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION BERLIN UNN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 2042

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT CSCE SHUM UR US

SUBJECT: PRAVDA ARTICLE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, FEB 12

1. SUMMARY: THE SOVIET COUNTEROFFENSIVE AGAINST
WESTERN --PARTICULARLY US-- POLICIES IN SUPPORT OF HUMAN
RIGHTS, AS WELL AS AGAINST DOMESTIC DISSIDENTS, ESCALATED
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BY A QUANTUM JUMP WITH THE PUBLICATION OF AN AUTHORITATIVE,
LENGTHY, AND HARSHLY WORDED ARTICLE IN FEB 12 PRAVDA
ENTITLED "WHAT IS CONCEALED BEHIND THE CLAMOR ABOUT
'HUMAN RIGHTS.'". (WE ASSUME DEPARTMENT HAS FBIS TEXT
AND LONG TASS ENGLISH SUMMARY.) TOUGH, STRIDENT AND
UNYIELDING, IT CAME WITHIN A MILLIMETER OF LABELING
DISSIDENTS AS ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE AND CALLED FOR A

"MANIFESTATION OF HIGH POLITICAL VIGILANCE" AGAINST THESE "NOXIOUS REMNANTS OF THE OLD CORRUPT SOCIETY." PRAVDA CHARGED WESTERN OPPONENTS OF DETENTE WITH ORGANIZING A CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATED PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN ON THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS:

--TO SLANDER AND DEFAME THE SOCIALIST WAY OF LIFE;
--TO DISRUPT DETENTE;
--TO UNDERMINE THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT; AND
--TO SOW CONFUSION AND DISUNITY WITHIN THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT.

ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE WERE NOT SINGLED OUT SPECIFICALLY FOR CRITICIS. THE ARTICLE DID CONDEMN THE STATEMENTS ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE ON BEHALF OF CHARTER 77 SIGNATORIES AND THE SOVIET DISSIDENTS. ACCORDING TO PRAVDA, SUCH ACTIONS CONSTITUTE BLATANT INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF SOCIALIST STATES, AND AS SUCH ARE TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE USSR AND INCOMPATIBLE WITH DETENTE POLICIES OR THE SPIRIT OF HELSINKI. THIS, INDEED, IS THE BURDEN OF THE MESSAGE ADDRESSED BY PRAVDA TO THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON. APPEARING IN THE CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE CPSU, THE UNSIGNED ARTICLE HAS WITHOUT QUESTION BEEN CLEARED AT THE HIGHEST CPSU LEVELS AND AS SUCH REPRESENTS A DEFINITIVE STATEMENT OF THE SOVIET POSITION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE AS A FACTOR IN INTERNATIONAL AND PARTICULARLY IN US-SOVIET RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE STEADILY HARDENING POSITION OF THE USSR ON THE SUBJECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS RECEIVED ITS CLEAREST,
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HARSHEST, AND MOST AUTHORITATIVE EXPRESSION IN A LENGTHY UNSIGNED ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN FEB 12 PRAVDA, ENTITLED "WHAT IS CONCEALED BEHIND THE CLAMOR ABOUT 'HUMAN RIGHTS'."

3. BREZHNEV IS CITED SEVERAL TIMES IN THE ARTICLE. MOST STRIKING IS THE QUOTATION FROM HIS JAN 18 TULA SPEECH IN WHICH HE STATES THAT REALIZATION OF THE UNDERTAKINGS IN THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT DEPENDS "UPON THE GENERAL STATUS OF POLITICAL RELATIONS AMONG STATES, UPON THE 'LEVEL OF DETENTE'. IN POISONING THE INTERNATIONAL ATMOSPHERE, THE ENEMIES OF DETENTE ONLY COMPLICATE THIS WORK." FOLLOWING THIS UP, THE ARTICLE LATER OBLIQUELY REFERS TO THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION BUT STOPS SHORT OF NAMING THE PRESIDENT OR THE SECRETARY. IT STATES THAT:

--"THE RENEGADES USE BOURGEOIS PROPAGANDA ONLY AS AN INSTRUMENT IN THEIR STRUGGLE AGAINST SOCIALISM" (I.E., THOSE WHO GIVE THEM AMUNITION ARE ENEMIES OF

SOCIALISM), AND, MORE DIRECTLY,
--"IN ATTEMPTING TO RESTRAIN THE PRESSURE OF
PROGRESSIVE FORCES, THE ORGANIZORS AND EXECUTORS OF THIS
ATTACK AGAINST SOCIALISM ARE TRYING TO BE THE HANDS OF
THOSE FIGURES IN WESTERN GOVERNMENTS WHO REALISTICALLY
EXPRESS READINESS TO DEEPEN PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE
AND BUSINESSLIKE COOPERATION WITH SOCIALIST STATES."

4. THE ARTICLE DEPICTS ENEMIES OF DETENTE
AND SOCIALISM AS INFURIATED BY THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF
SOCIALIST STATES AND THEIR PURSUIT OF PEACE AND DETENTE.
UNABLE TO COPE WITH THE ECONOMIC CRISES AND OTHER PROBLEMS
PLAGUING THE CAPITALIST WORLD, THEY UNLEASHED AN IDEOLOGICAL
CAMPAIGN AGAINST DETENTE BECAUSE THEY PERCEIVE THIS
POLICY AS LEADING TO THE PROGRESSIVE WEAKENING OF
CAPITALIST POSITIONS. DURING THE RECENT PERIOD,
"IMAGINED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS IN
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SOCIALIST STATES" BECAME THE SUBJECT OF AN "UNPRE-
CEDENTEDLY NOISY CAMPAIGN" REGARDING:
--THE SO-CALLED RIGHTS OF WORKERS IN POLAND;
--THE MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GDR IN DEFENSE OF ITS
LEGITIMATE INTERESTS;
--THE PITIFUL GROUP OF ANTI-SOVIET RENEGADES WHO
SLANDER THEIR OWN COUNTRY AND PEOPLE AND WHO ARE
ALLEGEDLY PERSECUTED IN THE USSR AS "DISSIDENTS."

5. THE TACTICS. THIS IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN, PRAVDA
CLAIMS, REPRESENTS A CAREFULLY PLANNED AND COORDINATED
DIVERSIONARY ACTION CHARACTERIZED BY:
---HEAVY EMPHASIS ON "HUMAN RIGHTS" BY RECENTLY ACCELE-
RATED WESTERN PROPAGANDA BROADCASTS AIMED AT SOCIALIST
STATES;
--SYNCHRONIZED POSITIONS ADOPTED BY THE WESTERN PRESS;
--THE UTILIZATION OF "DISSIDENTS" AND RENEGADES FROM
SOCIALIST STATES;
--PRETENSIONS AT OBJECTIVITY IN THE TREATMENT OF
HUMAN RIGHTS;
--THE CREATION OF THE ILLUSION THAT AN "OPPOSITION"
TO SOCIALISM EXISTS IN SOCIALIST STATES.

6. THE REALITY. THE ACTUAL STATE OF AFFAIRS, PRAVDA
ARGUES, IS VASTLY DIFFERENT:
--"DISSIDENTS" REPRESENT NO ONE BUT THEMSELVES;
-- THEY EXIST ONLY BECAUSE THEY ARE SUPPORTED, FINANCED,
AND PRAISED BY THE WEST;
--THEY PARROT THE VIEWS OF THEIR FOREIGN MASTERS;
-- "DISSIDENTS" ENGAGE IN DIRECT COLLABORATION WITH
FOREIGN ANTI-SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS;

--THEY SHOW THEIR TRUE COLORS WHENEVER THEY GO WEST
AND OPENLY OPPOSE THE SOCIALIST ORDER BY JOINING RADIO
LIBERTY OR ANTI-SOVIET PUBLICATIONS LIKE "KONTINENT."

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7. THE TRUTH. IN THE USSR, ACCORDING TO PRAVDA, NO ONE
IS PERSECUTED FOR HIS BELIEFS. HOWEVER, VIOLATIONS
OF LAW AGAINST PROPAGANDA AND AGITATION AIMED AT UNDER-
MINING THE SOCIALIST SYSTEM, OR THE SPREAD OF OUTRIGHT
FALSEHOODS SLANDERING THE SOVIET STATE AND SOCIETY,
ARE PUNISHABLE UNDER ARTICLES 70 AND 190 OF THE RSFSR
CRIMINAL CODE (AND CORRESPONDING STATUTES IN OTHER
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REPUBLICS HAVING TO DO WITH "ANTI-SOVIET ACTIVITIES").
AND IF A FEW ANTI-SOVIETS WHO HAVE BEEN PUNISHED IN
ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW "ARE TODAY OBJECTS OF SPECIAL
SOLICITUDE BY CERTAIN CIRCLES IN THE WEST, IT IS ONLY
BECAUSE THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO
DISCREDIT SOCIALISM...".

8. PUBLIC ANGER AGAINST DISSIDENTS. THE ARTICLE REPORTS
THAT PRAVDA, ALONG WITH OTHER SOVIET PAPERS, RADIO, AND
TELEVISION, WAS RECEIVING A FLOOD OF LETTERS FROM SOVIET
CITIZENS EXPRESSING OUTRAGE AND ANGER AT RENEGADES WHO
SELL OUT TO THE FORCES OF IMPERIALISM. ONE IS QUOTED
AS REFERRING TO THEM AS "TRAITORS, ENEMIES OF SOVIET POWER
(VLAST)". "WITHOUT QUALMS OF CONSCIENCE, THEY DEFEND
THOSE 'FREEDOMS' AND 'RIGHTS' WHICH WERE BROUGHT BY
HITLERITE FASCISM AND WHICH DROWNED EUROPE IN BLOOD."
AND WHILE A SMALL GROUP OF RENEGADES DOES NOT POSE A
THREAT TO THE SOVIET ORDER, IT DOES DEMONSTRATE THAT
HOSTILE ELEMENTS FROM THE OLD SOCIETY CONTINUE TO
SURVIVE UNDER SOCIALISM. "THIS IS WHY IT IS NECESSARY,
AS NEVER BEFORE, TO MANIFEST HIGH POLITICAL VIGILANCE"
IN STRUGGLING AGAINST THEM AND IN CULTIVATING A
SPIRIT OF PATRIOTISM AND LOYALTY TO THE PARTY.

9. THE HYPOCRITES. PRAVDA INVEIGHS AGAINST THOSE WHO
DEMAND THE OBSERVANCE OF THE HELSINKI OBLIGATIONS
"WITH FOAMING MOUTHS" WHILE BY THEIR OWN ACTIONS THEY
DESTROY THE MOST ESSENTIAL PRECONDITIONS AND SUBSTANCE
OF HELSINKI:

--DETENTE AIMS AT BRINGING PEOPLES TOGETHER, AND TO
DEVELOP RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGN RIGHTS, AND NATIONAL LAWS
AND CUSTOMS;

--BUT OPPONENTS OF DETENTE, WHILE WAVING THE FLAG OF
DETENTE, SEEK TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF
SOCIALIST STATES;

--THIS IS DEMONSTRATED, FOR EXAMPLE, BY THE RECENT
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ACTION OF THE US STATE DEPARTMENT IN SHOWING A
SUSPICIOUSLY TOUCHING "CONCERN" FOR "DISSIDENTS" IN
THE USSR AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

10. THE AIMS OF THE WESTERN CAMPAIGN. IN SHORT, THE
CAMPAIGN SEEKS TO DISTRACT THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE WEST
FROM THE CRISIS BEING EXPERIENCED BY THE CAPITALIST
SYSTEM. THE ATTACK MOUNTED AGAINST SOCIALISM IS INTENDED
TO CONCEAL THE ABSENCE OF DEMOCRACY IN CAPITALIST

STATES, AND ALL THEIR SOCIAL EVILS. ITS IMMEDIATE

TACTICAL GOALS:

--TO DISCREDIT AND WEAKEN SOCIALISM;

--TO HEAT UP THE ATMOSPHERE IN THE PERIOD BEFORE THE
APPROACHING BELGRADE MEETING OF HELSINKI SIGNATORIES;

--TO DISORIENT AND SPLIT THE PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL-

POLITICAL FORCES IN CAPITALIST STATES BY SETTING THE
WESTERN COMMUNIST PARTIES AGAINST THE RULING PARTIES OF
SOCIALIST STATES.

11. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES WITH A REAFFIRMA-
TION OF FAITH IN THE STRENGTH AND SOLIDARITY OF THE
SOCIALIST COMMUNITY, AND THE VITALITY AND JUSTICE OF
ITS IDEALS. MARXISTS-LENINISTS, IT ASSERTS, DO NOT
CLAIM THAT THE SOCIALIST SOCIETY HAS REACHED PERFECTION,
AND THEY DO NOT CONCEAL ITS DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS.
NOR DO THEY SEEK TO IMPOSE UNIFORMITY ON THE SOCIALIST
COMMUNITY. "BUT WE CANNOT AGREE WITH THOSE WHO CONTRARY
TO ALL REALITY PUT IN QUESTION OUR EVIDENT SUCCESSES;
WE WILL NOT ALLOW ANY INTERFERENCE IN OUR INTERNAL AFFAIRS.
NEITHER THE PEOPLES OF THE USSR, NOR THE PEOPLES OF
OTHER SOCIALIST STATES, WILL PERMIT ANYONE TO VIOLATE
LAWS ESTABLISHED BY THEIR WILL AND REFLECTING THEIR
INTERESTS."

12. COMMENT: THE PRAVDA PIECE IS AN INDICATION
THAT WESTERN STATEMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS
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ISSUES ARE CAUSING SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES FOR SOVIET
LEADERSHIP. WE TAKE THE ARTICLE TO BE BOTH A DECLARATION
TO THE WEST AND AN EXPLANATION TO THE DOMESTIC AUDIENCE
OF THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM. AS SUCH IT IS A BROAD-
GAUGED ATTACK INDICATING THAT THE LEADERSHIP IS
RESPONDING TO SEVERAL PROBLEMS, BUT THAT FOR THE
MOMENT THE MOST IMPORTANT IS TO TAKE THIS "PRINCIPLED
POSITION" TO MAKE CLEAR TO THE WEST, AND THE US IN
PARTICULAR, THAT IT WILL BROOK NO INTERFERENCE IN ITS
INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

13. THE ARTICLE GIVES AN INDICATION OF SOME OF THE
REASONING WHICH HAS GONE INTO THE RECENT HARRASSMENTS
AND ARRESTS OF DISSIDENTS AND THE REFERENCES TO THE
SOVIET LAWS BEING VIOLATED BY THE DISSIDENTS INDICATES
THAT PROSECUTION MAY BE IN PREPARATION FOR SOME, IF NOT
ALL, OF THEM. THIS IN TURN SUGGESTS THAT THE LEADERSHIP
WILL MEET THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE AND THE WEST'S CHALLENGE
HEAD ON. IN THIS SENSE THE SOVIETS ARE PRACTICING A
FORM OF "DELINKAGE" OF THEIR OWN, BY
LIMITING THEIR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO THE AREA OF HUMAN

RIGHTS. NEVERTHELESS, THE CITATIONS OF THE BREZHNEV
TULA SPEECH ALSO SUGGEST THAT THERE MAY IN FUTURE BE
IMPLICATIONS IN OTHER AREAS OF DETENTE SHOULD THE
WESTERN CAMPAIGN CONTINUE.

14. FINALLY, AT NO POINT ARE PRESIDENT OR SECRETARY
VANCE DIRECTLY CRITICIZED, BUT THERE IS THE CLEAR
IMPLICATION THAT IF THE "HANDS" OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION
ARE NOT YET "TIED", THEY MAY BE IF THE PRESENT POLICY
CONTINUES.
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